

# NEWS AND NOTES FOR FLORIDA VETERANS

Veterans Service Center, VA Regional Office  
St. Petersburg, FL

August 2004



The "News and Notes for Florida Veterans" is published monthly by the Veterans Service Center, VA Regional Office, St. Petersburg, Florida, to provide information on VA benefit programs to veterans and dependents in Florida. The material presented does not have the effect of laws or regulations. Please send questions or comments on this newsletter to Veterans Service Center, ATTN: "News and Notes," PO Box 1437, St. Petersburg, FL 33731. We do not have the resources to maintain a mailing list for distribution to individuals; however this newsletter is available on the St. Petersburg VA Regional Office web site at [www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete](http://www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete).

**VA CLINIC IN HALLANDALE MOVES TO NEW LOCATION IN HOLLYWOOD** The Hallandale VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic has moved to 3702 Washington Street, Hollywood Medical Pavilion, Suite 201, Hollywood, Florida 33021. The name of the clinic has changed to "Hollywood VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic." The Hollywood VA Clinic telephone phone number is (954) 986-1811. The phone system is operating Monday-Friday, from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

**SOME SURVIVORS OF VETERANS FACE DEADLINE FOR RESTORED BENEFIT** (VA News Release, June 24, 2004) WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) wants to ensure that surviving spouses of deceased veterans are aware of an approaching deadline that may affect entitlement to Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefits. Last year, President Bush signed Public Law 108-183, the "Veterans Benefits Act of 2003," which restores entitlement to DIC and related home loan and education benefits for surviving spouses who remarry on or after their 57<sup>th</sup> birthdays. VA officials are concerned that surviving spouses may not be aware of this change in law, or may overlook this benefit if their subsequent marriages have not ended.

Generally, VA pays DIC to the surviving spouses of military servicemembers who die while on active duty, and to surviving spouses of veterans whose death resulted from service-related causes. Under previous law, surviving spouses who remarried were not eligible for DIC unless their marriages ended. At that time they could apply for reinstatement of benefits. Under the new law, surviving spouses who remarried after age 57 and before Dec. 16, 2003, have a limited time to apply for restoration of DIC. They have one year from the date the new law was enacted (Dec. 16, 2003) to apply for restoration of benefits. If VA receives the application later than Dec. 15, 2004, restoration of DIC must be denied. The one-year application period does not apply to other surviving spouses whose remarriage on or after attaining age 57 followed enactment of the law.

**VETERANS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE INFORMATION - ANYWHERE, ANYTIME** (VA News Release June 24, 2004)

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that veterans will now be able to access their Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) accounts at any time of the day or night from any computer or telephone.

Using a secure Web site, the VGLI Online Account Access system allows veterans to obtain basic information on their account through the insurance Web site at [www.insurance.va.gov](http://www.insurance.va.gov). Veterans will be able to view their current amount of coverage, premium rate, and billing method, as well as change their billing address. Users' privacy will be protected by the latest cybersecurity measures.

Also available on VA's insurance Web site is a new life insurance calculator that allows veterans to calculate a recommended amount of life insurance based on their financial information. The veteran enters financial information directly into the Web site including financial obligations, net additional income needed by survivors and current assets. By subtracting total assets from total financial obligations and net income needed, the calculator arrives at the amount of life insurance recommended.

Veterans can also access their account information through a new VGLI interactive voice response system that allows veterans to obtain account information through the telephone. Veterans can call VA at 1-800-419-1473 any time, day or night, by using their telephone keypad and can hear recorded information on their accounts. They can also request certain changes to their VGLI accounts, such as billing frequency and payment method, as well as order certain forms via mail or fax.

**VA AUTOMATES SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS INSURANCE APPLICATION** (VA News Release July 14, 2004) PHILADELPHIA – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has expanded its online benefits applications to include Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI). S-DVI is a VA program of life insurance that provides \$10,000 of coverage to veterans who have received a service-connected disability rating for a new condition from VA within the past two years; were separated from service on or after April 25, 1951, under other than dishonorable

conditions; and are in good health except for their service-connected conditions. VA's Web site already provides online convenience for applications for compensation, pension, health care and vocational rehabilitation benefits as well as education enrollment certification. The addition of Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance means veterans can be assured their application is transmitted to the VA Insurance Center in Philadelphia without mailing delay.

The application can be accessed through the online applications link at VA's main Web page at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) or through the insurance Web pages at [www.insurance.va.gov](http://www.insurance.va.gov). To initiate the process through a secure Web site protecting users' privacy, eligible veterans should click on "Apply for S-DVI Insurance Online Using Our Autoform Application." The online application process guides applicants through each step of the application with easy-to-use help screens and tools. The first steps of the process will allow veterans to immediately determine if they are eligible for the insurance. They will also be able to learn about the different types of insurance plans and premiums available to them. Once transmitted, applications are immediately processed. However, veterans who are uncomfortable submitting their application online may also print their application from the Web site and mail or fax it.

**VA TO BEGIN CHIROPRACTIC CARE** (VA News Release, June 25, 2004) WASHINGTON – Veterans can receive chiropractic care at 26 selected Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities beginning this fall. VA will hire or contract with doctors of chiropractic to provide the care. In consultation with VA primary care providers, doctors of chiropractic will offer patient evaluations and chiropractic care for neuromusculoskeletal conditions. VA was authorized to offer chiropractic care and services under the provisions of section 204 of Public Law 107-135, the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001. Locations where chiropractic care will be provided include Tampa and Miami, Florida.

Chiropractors seeking employment or to provide contract services to veterans should call the Human Resources office of the above facilities. Some VA positions may be advertised at <http://www.vacareers.com>.

#### **VETERANS RECEIVING COMPENSATION FOR POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)** (Feb. 2004)

<b>Period</b>	<b>No of veterans</b>
Pre-WWII	2
WWII	24,030
Korea	9,258
Vietnam	147,739
Gulf War	11,533
Peacetime	7,584
Total	200,146

#### **IMPORTANT DATES IN AUGUST**

**August 9** last day to input change of address or establish direct deposit on compensation and pension awards in time for the 09-01-2004 payments

**August 23** last day to change or cancel direct deposit on compensation and pension awards in time for the 09-01-2004 payments

#### **VA FACILITIES ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS:**

**VA Regional Office, St. Petersburg** - PO Box 1437, St. Petersburg, FL 33731 **1-800-827-1000**

**Regional Processing Office, Atlanta, GA** (education claims) -

PO Box 100022, Decatur, GA 30031-7022

**1-888-GIBILL1 (442-4551)**

Telephone number for Chapter 30 self-verifications

**1-877-823-2378**

**Veterans Health Administration Toll-Free Hotline** (medical care) - **1-877-222-8387**

**VA EFT Information Hotline** (electronic funds transfer - direct deposit) **1-877-838-2778**

**VA Insurance Center, Philadelphia** (VA Insurance) - PO Box 42954, Philadelphia, PA 19101 **1-800-669-8477**

**VA Health Administration Center** (CHAMPVA and Spina Bifida health care) -

CHAMPVA inquiries: PO Box 65023, Denver, CO 80206-5023

CHAMPVA claims: PO Box 65024, Denver, CO 80206-5024

Spina Bifida inquiries and claims: PO Box 65025, Denver, CO 80206-5025 **1-800-733-8387**

**Foreign Medical Program Office** (medical treatment abroad) - PO Box 65021, Denver, CO 80206-5021 **303-331-7590**

#### **National Cemeteries**

10,000 Bay Pines Blvd N, Bay Pines FL **727-398-9426**

6502 SW 102nd Ave, Bushnell FL 33513 **352-793-7740**

Naval Air Station, Pensacola FL **850-453-4108/4846**

**National Cemetery Administration Office of Memorial Programs** (headstones and markers) - 810 Vermont Ave NW, Washington, DC 20420 **1-800-697-6947**

**Loan Guaranty Eligibility Center** (certificates of eligibility)

PO Box 20729, Winston-Salem, NC 27120

**1-888-244-6711**

**Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) Unit** - Chicago VA Regional Office **1-800-829-4833**

#### **INTERNET SITES OF INTEREST:**

VA Web Site: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

VA Web Automated Reference Materials System (WARMS) <http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/>

Property Management [www.ocwen.com](http://www.ocwen.com)

Florida Department of Veterans Affairs:

[www.floridavets.org/](http://www.floridavets.org/)

St. Pete Regional Office: [www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete](http://www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete)

